

11
DARIUS'S FEAST: 2

O R,

The FORCE of TRUTH.

A

P O E M,

ADDRESSED

To the Right Honourable the

Earls of SALISBURY *and* EXETER.



L O N D O N :

Printed for LAWLON GILLIVER at *Homer's* Head
against St. *Dunstan's* Church in *Fleetstreet*, 1734.
[Price One Shilling.]

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P R E F A C E.



THE following Poem contains a remarkable Contest, that happened in the Court of Darius Hystaspes. The Story is told by Esdras, and is one of the choicest Pieces of Antiquity. In the Eastern Countries, if we may give Credit to old Chronicles, learned Strifes were once mightily in Use. Arts, and Sciences were the Product of the Soil. It was grown into a Fashion to be wise, and the Favours and Caresses, bestowed on those that were distinguished for any Excellence, kindled strong Emulations. In those Days, the Palaces of Princes swarmed with lettered Men, and Monarchs then had Leisure and Inclination to attend to Tryals of Wit, and Abilities to make a Judgment of them.

The Debate, recited in these Verses, was upon what is to be accounted Strongest. Honours were proposed for the Conqueror, agreeable to the Magnificence of the Times, and the Lists were entered by three able Champions, who behaved most gallantly. The Person that pays so fine a Compliment to the King, as well as he that descants on the Strength of Wine, is unknown. It is easy to guess they were both Men of Distinction. But the last, whose Speech in praise of Beauty had such an Influence upon the Assembly, is celebrated by the Jewish Writers, and makes a noble Figure in History. Indeed it is no wonder his Character is transmitted down to us so advantageously, since he brought about one of the greatest
Events

P R E F A C E.

Events that is recorded in their Annals, and which gave them a new Era. For the rebuilding of the Temple, was the Effect of his happy Management, and Address. 'Tis true, every Speech has its peculiar Beauties. Never were Thoughts chosen with more Delicacy, or ranged in a more just and elegant Order. All is extremely artful without the least appearance of Art. The Transitions are easy and natural, and the Images strong and lively. Perhaps it may not be amiss to remark in this Place, that it is the Opinion of some great Men, that the Book, of which this is part, is the genuine Work of Ezra; and that the other, that is received into the Canon of the Old Testament, and bears his Name, is only an Epitomy of it.

It would be very improper here to begin a Critic upon the sacred Writings. The Subject, however pleasing it might be, would afford Matter too copious to be contained within the narrow Bounds of this Preface. Our famous Countrymen, to their Glory be it spoken, have not wanted a Relish for their charming Elegancies. Doctor Donne has given us the Lamentations in as good Verse, as can be expected from the Times he wrote in. Mr. Waller is beholden to the Scriptures for many admirable Strokes in his Canto's on divine Love. Much of the Psalms and of other Parts of Holy Writ, would doubtless have been interspersed in the Davideis, had it ever been perfected. The great Author of Paradise lost and regain'd was too well acquainted with the Spirit and Sublimity of these Divine Compositions, not to transcribe a considerable deal of them into his own. The Song of the three Children, the Mosaic Description of the Creation, and several historical Passages, prove very fine Embellishments. To say but a word more, the Solomon of Mr. Prior, and the Messiah of Mr. Pope will live, together with their other noble Performances, in spite of Envy and Detraction, while the World endures.



Darius's



Darius's Feast :

O R,

The FORCE of TRUTH.



WAS on a joyful Day ; the gorgeous Feast
Crown'd the rich Board ; the sparkling
Goblets danc'd

The mirthful Round : on high the Tapers blaz'd
In beauteous Rows ; and Instruments divine,
Responsive to the Voice, in various Lay
Alternate took the Ear : the vaulted Dome,
Wide-sounding, eccho'd to the gladsome Song,
That spoke *Darius* great, *Darius* good,

B

Sov'reign

Sov'reign of Worlds, and mightiest *Lord* of *Lords*.

The *King*, refulgent on his golden Throne,
Shone like the Sun serenely bright, and shed
Radiance, and Smiles, and Mirth. In Garb diverse
The *Ethiopian*, scorch'd on sultry Plains,
Persian, and *Mede*, and *Indian*, native fierce
Of Regions far remote, hereafter nam'd
Indoſtan, *Pegu*, *Malabar*, or where
Ganges, or *Ind* shall roll their rapid Tides,
Or *Agra*'s sumptuous Palace, Seat of Kings!
Its glittering Spires erect ; *Princedom*s and *Powers*
Attendant from a shining Round — When thus
The *Monarch* (of his matchless Grandeur vain,
And all his Soul inflam'd with high Renown,
And Deeds to come) “ Advance ye *Sons* of Wit,
“ Declare your Sentence : to the Contest, pleas'd,
“ We lend an Ear, and on the well-feign'd Tale
“ Discreet Decision give : say, what on Earth
“ Is *strongest*, *powerfullest* ” —

He ended, and uprose

One

The FORCE of TRUTH. 3

One for fair Wisdom fam'd, nor deem'd of Men
Less eloquent of Tongue; his goodly Mien
Won Audience, and Applause deserv'd; he bow'd
With meek Demeanour thrice, thrice wav'd his Hand
Submissive, then with graceful Accent spoke.

"Supreme on Earth! and brightest Pow'rs attend!
"How fine the Frame of Man! His Nerves how
"strong!
"How lovely sweet each nice-proportion'd Limb!
"Structure divine! What Emanations flow,
"Fast-beaming, from the Mind! his mighty Arm
"Furious th' unweildy Javelin flings, or whirls
"The pointed Spear: forth from the twanging Bow
"The Dart elanc'd sings thro' the yielding Air
"With Ruin fraught: nor dares on Earth, or Main
"Ought thwart his Will. Yet, far more excellent
"The scepter'd King! Him strongest, pow'rfullest
"I deem, nor deem unwise. On him sole Lord
"Destructions wait; rous'd at his high Command
"The hottest Battle glows; loud Clarions send
"The hideous Clang; Hosts against Hosts appear,
Troop-

"Trooping in gallant Arms; across the Field
 "Fierce Lightnings flash: upon their plummy Crests
 "Horror takes stand, and winged Victory,
 "Observant of his Voice, drives Rout on Rout.

"In vain or Mount, or Wall, or brazen Tower,
 "Rear'd on huge Columns, bids Defiance proud
 "Of Siege regardless, or Assault, proclaim'd
 "Impregnable: soon at the martial Shock
 "To sink successful, and with ghastly Ruin
 "To mark the Ground, a Monument of Fame!

"Fond, in his Cause, alike to fall, or rise
 "O'er prostrate Powers, and heaps of slain victorious
 "See Mortals! Pleas'd, if bid to spare, they spare,
 "Or wrathfully let loose the wastful Sword
 "Of Desolation; and at his Feet present
 "Trophies, and Ensigns, Wreaths, and plated Shields,
 "And glittering Spoils: Signals of bold Emprize!

"Nor less in Peace, than War the *Monarch* shines
 "Awful, rever'd; with Adoration prone

"To

The FORCE of TRUTH. 5

“To him his Subjects bend, and grateful pay
“Their duteous Homage, and Allegiance pure,
“And tributary Wealth. The golden Corn
“For him grows wavy on the Tith, to pile
“His sumptuous Board ; for him the mantling Vine
“Teems with autumnal Clusters, and bestows
“Its racy Juice, to sparkle in his Cups
“Delectable, Nectareous. High-enthron’d
“Beneath a Canopy of State, emblaz’d
“With orient Gems, and labour’d o’er with Gold
“Magnificent, he tastes the curious Viands,
“And swills the precious Draughts: whilst charming
“Sounds
“Of vocal Shells, soft Pipes, and chiming Strings
“Exalt his Soul: till Sleep with silent Pace
“Steals on his Eyes, and brooding o’er his Thoughts
“Locks every Sense within its downy Arms,
“Softly becalm’d. Myriads, industrious, wait,
“And guard his Slumbers with observant Watch.

“Say, Princes ! Potentates ! Is not the *King*
“Most great, tremendous, whose commanding Nod
C “Obse-

“Obsequious Duty tends, whose awful Frown
 “Strikes Terror on the Strong, whose very Voice
 “Makes chill the Blood, and shakes the Nerves of
 “War?”

He paus'd; and straight *another* fierce uprose,
 Patron of Wine — Wine sparkled in his Eyes,
 And tip'd his easy Tongue — Then no Delay
 Of Preface brooking — Thus in Height began —

“*Wine* is my Theme — Who can declare the Power,
 “The turbulent Strength, and Energy of *Wine*?
 “Best skill'd the Wight, whose Mind, with pleasing
 “Fumes

“Intoxicated, oft has shook the Chain
 “Of chearful Bondage, and in gamefome Mood
 “The jocund *Tyrant* blest'd, whose boundless Sway
 “Vanquish'd all own: nought boots the glorious Frame
 “Of God-like Man, Sapience, or planted Fort
 “Of Reason boasted long, surpriz'd, and storm'd.

“*Wine* makes the *Monarch*, and desponding Orphan
 “To think the same; who mindless of his Birth,
 “And

The FORCE of TRUTH.

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“ And low Estate, assumes a regal Port,
“ Affects to nod, and stalks, and looks a *King*.
“ The wretched Caitif, fir'd by *Wine*, forgets
“ His dolorous Groans, and ranges, unconfin'd,
“ The Cave of Woe (none breaths a purer Air)
“ And triumphs in his Shackles. Give the Beggar *Wine*,
“ Straight penfive Thoughts, and haggard Grief
“ forsake
“ The Breast, of Joy forlorn ; imaginary Riches
“ Enlarge his Soul ; magnificent in Thought,
“ His Bosom swells with fancy'd Worlds of Wealth.”

“ How grateful to the Sense is *Wine* ! How rich
“ The fuming Steams ascend from copious Bowls
“ Of massy Gold, with Pearl emboss'd, and grac'd
“ With various Sculpture, curling Vines, and Figures
“ Of noblest Emblem ! Sure 'tis Heaven to feel
“ The glowing Transports, and in Merriment
“ To quaff the purple Juice, of nicest Flavour,
“ And elegantest Taste, lenient of Grief,
“ And Foe to wrinkled Care ! Here dwell not Fears,
“ Surmises : plaintive Moans, or panging Sorrows ”

“ Here

" Here make not their abode: But blooming Joys,
 " Laughter, and Jollity, and smooth Conceit,
 " And wayward Wit, and Mirth of quaint Device
 " Inventive, Boon of generous *Wine*. With *Wine*
 " The Heart of Man grows rich, and proudly revels
 " In wild Disport; nor dreads the lordly Frown
 " Of state-usurping Governour, or Menace
 " Of haughtiest *Monarch*, more than *Monarch* brave.

" Hail ! Sov'reign Liquor ! Lo ! inspir'd by Thee,
 " Bolder my Numbers flow, while I essay
 " Thy Praises to recount, in vain if Thou
 " Aid'st not my Tongue with Elocution prompt,
 " And strong Perswasion — Thou the Gift of Speech
 " Gracious bestow'st, and bid'st the struggling Thoughts
 " Unfetter'd roam ; from Chains of Dullness freed,
 " Or proud Reserve, or Awe, engend'ring Jest,
 " And social Joys — Thou too in bloody Fray
 " Rul'st uncontroul'd ; heated by *Wine* malign,
 " Friends know not Friends ; but couch the mortal
 " Lance
 " In horrid Conflict ; clamorous Dins ensue,
 " Reviling Taunts, mad Rant, and wild Uproar,
 " And

The FORCE of TRUTH. 9

“ And hideous Jargon. Nor retains the Mind
“ The dreadful Images ; the shifting Scene
“ Flits with the Fumes ; such is the Power of Wine —

He ceas'd abrupt — deeming the Conquest won
With ease ; disdaining to contend, with Foe
Of Strength inferior match'd : when slow uprose
With lovely Aspect, and endearing Looks
Zorobabel, and stood, as one intent
To please the Fair, nor unregarded stood,
Courting the gracious Smile, and Glance divine.
Then thus — softest Deportment adding Grace
Invincible, and height'ning every Charm
Of sweetest Eloquence with comely Gesture.

“ My Voice, not venal, strictest Truth unfolds,
“ To Truth attend ! Strong is the *King* to quell
“ Usurping Rage, and lay the Mightiest low !
“ And strong the Pow'r of Wine, to fill the Soul
“ With noblest Ardour, and becoming Fury !
“ But not the *King*, that quells with potent Sway
“ Usurping Rage, and lays the Mightiest low ;

D

“ Nor

10 D A R I U S ' S *Feast* : Or,

“ Nor pow’rful Wine, that fills the tow’ring Soul
“ With noblest Ardour, and becoming Fury,
“ Can win Command o’er *Woman*’s mightier Charm,
“ O’er Charm of *Woman*, strong above compare !

“ Beneficent to Man hath always been
“ The Mind of *Woman* ; else nor boasting Man
“ Nor Grandeur, Darling of his Soul ! could be.
“ Woman gave Birth to Kings, and bravest Warriors,
“ Fam’d for their Prowess, and heroick Feats
“ Thro’ Sea, and Continent. From Woman sprung
“ Who plant the Vineyard, lay the Grape to ripen
“ Luxuriant in the Sun, pregnant with Wines !

“ Skill’d in the various Loom, the *female Race*
“ Weave curious Garments, silver’d o’er, or wrought
“ With gay Embroidery ; the blended Colours
“ Red, azure, purple, green, are taught to shine
“ In bright Confusion — Hence the costly Mantle,
“ The ermin’d Robe, rich Vest, and sweeping Train,
“ That floats redundant on the Ground : The Pomp,
“ And Pageantry of *Kings* ! Embellishments
“ Scorn’d

The FORCE of TRUTH. 11

“ Scorn’d by the *Fair*, conscious of native Lustre,
“ Above the fervile Mimickries of Art,
“ Splendid Defects! by Nature form’d to charm.

“ Nature on *Woman* lavish’d all the Pride
“ Of Ornament, and pour’d with bounteous Hand
“ Innumerable Graces — See! She moves!
“ Ten thousand Airs, and winning Smiles attract
“ Th’ enamour’d Heart, tangled in Folds of Love,
“ An easy Captive! Unaffected Beauty,
“ Complacence, Blandishments, and soft Desires
“ Shine in her Face; adown her Shoulders wave
“ The golden Tresses; awful in her Eye
“ Sits Majesty enthron’d, forbidding rude
“ Approach, or looser Toy; to gentle Minds
“ Not unbenign, but amiably mild
“ And condescending: well she knows to rule
“ Her vassal Man, and tame the destin’d Thrall.

“ For her the Robber traverses the Globe,
“ And tempts the Ocean wave, undaunted meets
“ The brinded Lyon, fearless of his Rage

“ Intent

" Intent on Rapine, studious how to deck
 " His Love with far-fetch'd Spoils: abandon'd some
 " Have voluntary Bondage fought, and born
 " Th' opprobrious Name of Slave: despairing others
 " Have lost their Wits for *Woman*, sigh'd, and rav'd,
 " And gnash'd their Teeth, and roll'd their Eyes, and
 " talk'd

" Of cruel Fair-Ones: Nor have wanted some
 " To pine with irksome Thoughts, and rueful Looks,
 " Kill'd by Disdain: nor some to meet their Fate
 " In Tournament, or Fight 'midst banner'd Hosts,
 " On Plains pavilion'd with the Tire of War.

" Is not *Darius* strong, the Dread of Nations,
 " That bend the suppliant Knee? Yet oft I've seen him,
 " Enrob'd in Splendors, in full Frequence bright
 " Hold Dalliance with the fair *Apame*. She
 " Snatch'd from his Head the Diadem, to grace
 " Her Brows; with silent Ravishment he gaz'd,
 " Smil'd, if she smil'd, and sorrow'd, if she sorrow'd.

Abash'd the *Princes* cast their Eyes around

In

The FORCE of TRUTH. 13

In wild Dismay ; then on each other stare
With stedfast Gaze ; that witness'd strange Surprise,
Astonishment unlook'd-for — Soon the *Youth*
Resum'd his Tale, and thus with warmth —

“ How strong
“ Are female Charms ! Vast this capacious Ball !
“ Wide thro' the boundless Infinite is stretch'd
“ The blue Expanse of Heav'n ! Swift rolls the Sun,
“ Circling each Day this spacious Concave ; Void
“ Immeasurable ! Great thy Works ! How wond'rous
“ great
“ Thou sov'reign ARCHITECT ! How strong thy *Truth* !
“ The Glory, Majesty, and Might, and Power
“ Of Ages ! Bless'd be th' eternal God of *Truth* !

He said ; th' admiring *Throng* in silence stood
Fix'd for a while ; then into Songs burst forth,
And Acclamations loud, and jovial Shouts
Of Triumph : *him* they hail victorious, *him*
They celebrate with Hymns of Praise, and Strains
Melodious, Timbrels, warbling Harps, and Lutes,
E Chaunt-

14 D A R I U S ' S *Feast* : Or,

Chaunting the Force, and Majesty of *Truth*.

SALISBURY, accept my Verse ; the Muse for Thee
Soars an uncommon Height, on loftiest Wing
Buoy'd up ; let Truth with native Lustre warm
Thy Bosom — See ! She courts Thee to her Love !
From tinsel Vanities, and painted Pride,
Charm to the vulgar Gaze ! avert thine Eye.
Go on brave Youth ; the rugged Paths explore
Of arduous Virtue ; obstinately good,
Upbraid flagitious Times ; a generous Friend,
Help the Distressful ; call forth all the Worth
Of shining Ancestors, a Patriot firm,
Nor let three Nations, anxious, hope in vain.

* CECIL, to Thee once more the Muse directs
Her eager Flight ; once more I strike the Shell
With sacred Sounds inform'd ; the hallow'd Strains
Be thine : nor blame th' advent'rous Bard, that sings
Truth's mighty Conquest, in *Miltonian* Verse,
With filial Awe, and reverential Fear.
And if these Lines attract the gracious Eye

Of

* Earl of *Exeter*.

The FORCE of TRUTH. 15

Of *Cecil's Consort* ! oh ! may the *Fair* forgive
The rude Attempt to paint with artless Hand
The noblest Work of Heav'n ! hail happiest Pair !
For You may numerous Years roll radiant Rounds,
And brighter Days still brighter Days succeed !
Th' Award of *Heav'n* is just ! — Long Trains of Joys,
Joys exquisitely fine, await such Virtues —
Believe the Muse, that ne'er with luring Smiles,
A prostituted Wanton, fawn'd, or deign'd
To varnish Guilt, or sooth the monstrous Crimes
Of pamper'd Greatness, despicably mean.

Oh ! Thou *Supreme* ! still may my Lays to Thee
Be pleasing, who alone can't give to sing.
Not fabled *Muses*, or *Castalian Streams*
Avail ; Thou, Thou invoc'd by me, shalt aid
My daring Fancy, wak'ning Raptures, whilst
I sing to *Cecil*, and I sing of *Thee*.

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